

DRAFT

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) – State Plan FY2011

This document is DVR's FY2011 state plan and has been downloaded directly from the Rehabilitation Services Administration MIS site and retains their formatting.

DVR is taking comments on its FY2011 State Plan until June 25, 2010.

Comments may be submitted:

- Via e-mail to jane.mcintosh@alaska.gov
- By fax to Jane McIntosh at 269-3632
- By correspondence to Jane McIntosh, 1251 Muldoon Road, Suite 101, Anchorage AK 99504 or
- By telephone on June 3, 2010 from 8:30 to 4:30 by calling toll free 1-888-354-0094; ID 2179208#

DVR will submit the plan to RSA by June 30, 2010.

Screen 1 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Table of Contents

Preprint

Attachment 4.2(c)
Input of State Rehabilitation Council ^[1]
Attachment 4.7(b)(3)
Request for Waiver of Statewideness ^[2]
Attachment 4.8(b)(1)
Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System ^[3]
Attachment 4.8(b)(2)
Coordination with Education Officials ^[3]
Attachment 4.8(b)(3)
Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations ^[3]
Attachment 4.8(b)(4)
Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services ^[3]
Attachment 4.10
Comprehensive System of Personnel Development ^[4]
Attachment 4.11(a)
Statewide Assessment ^[3]
Attachment 4.11(b)
Annual Estimates ^[4]
Attachment 4.11(c)(1)
State Goals and Priorities ^[3]
Attachment 4.11(c)(3)
Order of Selection ^[5]
Attachment 4.11(c)(4)
Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds ^[4]
Attachment 4.11(d)
State's Strategies ^[3]
Attachment 4.11(e)(2)
Evaluation and Reports of Progress ^[4]
Attachment 6.3
Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services ^[3]

Footnotes

^[1]

Required annually except for agencies that are independent commissions do not provide this attachment.

^[2]

Required only of agencies requesting, or previously granted, a Waiver of Statewideness.

^[3]

The following attachments should be submitted whenever the information needs to be updated.

^[4]

The following attachments require annual updating and must be submitted each year.

^[5]

Required Annually for All Agencies on an Order of Selection

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Section 1: State Certifications

1.1 The (enter the name of designated state agency or designated state unit below)...

Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

... is authorized to submit this State Plan under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended [1] and its supplement under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act [2].

1.2 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the... (enter the name of the designated state agency below) [3]

Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

... agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State Plan [4], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations [5], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and the administration of the State Plan for the vocational rehabilitation services program.

1.3 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated state agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the provisions of the supplement to this State Plan [6], the Rehabilitation Act and all applicable regulations [7], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the Title I State Plan.

Yes

1.4 The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit has the authority under state law to perform the functions of the state regarding this State Plan and its supplement.

Yes

1.5 The state legally may carry out each provision of the State Plan and its supplement.

Yes

1.6 All provisions of the State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law.

Yes

1.7 The (enter title of state officer below)

Yes

Director Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

... has the authority under state law to receive, hold and disburse federal funds made available under this State Plan and its supplement.

1.8 The (enter title of state officer below)...

Yes

Director Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

... has the authority to submit this State Plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State Plan supplement for supported employment services.

1.9 The agency that submits this State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

Yes

State Plan Certified By

As the authorized signatory identified above, I hereby certify that I will sign, date and retain in the files of the designated state agency/designated state unit Section 1 of the Preprint, and separate Certification of Lobbying forms (Form ED-80-0013; available at <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed80-013.pdf>) for both the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

Signed?

Name of Signatory

Cheryl A. Walsh

Title of Signatory

Director Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy)

06/24/2009

Assurances Certified By

The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit provide the following assurance(s) in connection with the approval of the State Plan for FY 2011

Comments:

Signed?

Name of Signatory

Title of Signatory

Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy)

* The signatory of the assurance with the authority to execute and submit the State Plan will maintain a signed copy of the assurance(s) with the signed State Plan.

Section 1 Footnotes

[1] Public Law 93 112, as amended by Public Laws 93 516, 95 602, 98 221, 99 506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.

[2] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

[3] All references in this plan to "designated state agency" or to "the state agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[4] No funds under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved State Plan in accordance with Section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR part 361.

[5] Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85 and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR Part 361.

[6] No funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the Title I State Plan in accordance with Section 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[7] Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR Part 361, and 34 CFR Part 363.

Section 2: Public Comment on State Plan Policies and Procedures

2.1 Public participation requirements. (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.10(d), .20(a), (b), (d); and 363.11(g)(9))

(a) Conduct of public meetings.

The designated state agency, prior to the adoption of any substantive policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan, including making any substantive amendments to the policies and procedures, conducts public meetings throughout the state to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures.

(b) Notice requirements.

The designated state agency, prior to conducting the public meetings, provides appropriate and sufficient notice throughout the state of the meetings in accordance with state law governing public meetings or, in the absence of state law governing public meetings, procedures developed by the state agency in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council.

(c) Special consultation requirements.

The state agency actively consults with the director of the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations and native Hawaiian organizations on its policies and procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan.

Section 3: Submission of the State Plan and its Supplement

3.1 Submission and revisions of the State Plan and its supplement. (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; Section 501 of the Workforce Investment Act; 34 CFR 76.140; 361.10(e), (f), and (g); and 363.10)

(a) The state submits to the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration the State Plan and its supplement on the same date that the state submits either a State Plan under Section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or a state unified plan under Section 501 of that Rehabilitation Act.

(b) The state submits only those policies, procedures or descriptions required under this State Plan and its supplement that have not been previously submitted to and approved by the commissioner.

(c) The state submits to the commissioner, at such time and in such manner as the commissioner determines to be appropriate, reports containing annual updates of the information relating to the:

1. comprehensive system of personnel development;
2. assessments, estimates, goals and priorities, and reports of progress;
3. innovation and expansion activities; and
4. other updates of information required under Title I, Part B, or Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act that are requested by the commissioner.

(d) The State Plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of modifications the state determines to be necessary or the commissioner requires based on a change in state policy, a change in federal law, including regulations, an interpretation of the Rehabilitation Act by a federal court or the highest court of the state, or a finding by the commissioner of state noncompliance with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361 or 34 CFR 363.

3.2 Supported Employment State Plan supplement. (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.34 and 363.10)

(a) The state has an acceptable plan for carrying out Part B, of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act that provides for the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the cost of services leading to supported employment.

(b) The Supported Employment State Plan, including any needed annual revisions, is submitted as a supplement to the State Plan.

Section 4: Administration of the State Plan

4.1 Designated state agency and designated state unit. (Section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.13(a) and (b))

(a) Designated state agency.

1. There is a state agency designated as the sole state agency to administer the State Plan or to supervise its administration in a political subdivision of the state by a sole local agency.

2. The designated state agency

The designated state agency is:

- A. a state agency that is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities; or
- B. **X** a state agency that is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and includes a vocational rehabilitation unit as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

3. In American Samoa, the designated state agency is the governor.

(b) Designated state unit.

- 1. If the designated state agency is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(B) of this section, the state agency includes a vocational rehabilitation bureau, division or unit that:
 - A. is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and is responsible for the administration of the designated state agency's vocational rehabilitation program under the State Plan;
 - B. has a full-time director;
 - C. has a staff, at least 90 percent of whom are employed full-time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit; and
 - D. is located at an organizational level and has an organizational status within the designated state agency comparable to that of other major organizational units of the designated state agency.
- 2. The name of the designated state vocational rehabilitation unit is

Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

4.2 State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council. (Sections 101(a)(21) and 105 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.16 and .17)

The State Plan must contain one of the following assurances.

(a) The designated state agency is an independent state commission that:

- 1. is responsible under state law for operating or overseeing the operation of the vocational rehabilitation program in the state and is primarily concerned with the vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(A) of this section.
- 2. is consumer controlled by persons who:

- A. are individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit major life activities; and
 - B. represent individuals with a broad range of disabilities, unless the designated state unit under the direction of the commission is the state agency for individuals who are blind;
- 3. includes family members, advocates or other representatives of individuals with mental impairments; and
- 4. undertakes the functions set forth in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4).

or

(b) X The state has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.17 and the designated state unit

- 1. jointly with the State Rehabilitation Council develops, agrees to and reviews annually state goals and priorities and jointly submits to the commissioner annual reports of progress in accordance with the provisions of Section 101(a)(15) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.29 and subsection 4.11 of this State Plan;
- 2. regularly consults with the State Rehabilitation Council regarding the development, implementation and revision of state policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services;
- 3. includes in the State Plan and in any revision to the State Plan a summary of input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the council described in Section 105(c)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5), the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction described in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4), and other reports prepared by the council and the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations, including explanations for rejecting any input or recommendation; and
- 4. transmits to the council:
 - A. all plans, reports and other information required under 34 CFR 361 to be submitted to the commissioner;
 - B. all policies and information on all practices and procedures of general applicability provided to or used by rehabilitation personnel in carrying out this State Plan and its supplement; and
 - C. copies of due process hearing decisions issued under 34 CFR 361.57, which are transmitted in such a manner as to ensure that the identity of the participants in the hearings is kept confidential.

(c) If the designated state unit has a State Rehabilitation Council, Attachment 4.2(c) provides a summary of the input provided by the council consistent with the provisions identified in subparagraph (b)(3) of this

section; the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations; and, explanations for the rejection of any input or any recommendation.

4.3 Consultations regarding the administration of the State Plan. (Section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.21)

The designated state agency takes into account, in connection with matters of general policy arising in the administration of the plan and its supplement, the views of:

- (a) individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services or, as appropriate, the individuals' representatives;**
- (b) personnel working in programs that provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;**
- (c) providers of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;**
- (d) the director of the Client Assistance Program; and**
- (e) the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.**

4.4 Nonfederal share. (Sections 7(14) and 101(a)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60)

The nonfederal share of the cost of carrying out this State Plan is 21.3 percent and is provided through the financial participation by the state or, if the state elects, by the state and local agencies.

4.5 Local administration. (Sections 7(24) and 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47) and .15)

The State Plan provides for the administration of the plan by a local agency. No
If "Yes", the designated state agency:

- (a) ensures that each local agency is under the supervision of the designated state unit with the sole local agency, as that term is defined in Section 7(24) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47), responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program within the political subdivision that it serves; and**
- (b) develops methods that each local agency will use to administer the vocational rehabilitation program in accordance with the State Plan.**

4.6 Shared funding and administration of joint programs. (Section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.27)

The State Plan provides for the state agency to share funding and administrative responsibility with another state agency or local public agency to carry out a joint program to provide services to individuals with disabilities. No

If "Yes", the designated state agency submits to the commissioner for approval a plan that describes its shared funding and administrative arrangement. The plan must include:

- (a) a description of the nature and scope of the joint program;**
- (b) the services to be provided under the joint program;**
- (c) the respective roles of each participating agency in the administration and provision of services; and**
- (d) the share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.**

4.7 Statewideness and waivers of statewideness. (Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.25, .26, and .60(b)(3)(i) and (ii))

X This agency is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

(a) Services provided under the State Plan are available in all political subdivisions of the state.

(b) The state unit may provide services in one or more political subdivisions of the state that increase services or expand the scope of services that are available statewide under this State Plan if the:

1. nonfederal share of the cost of these services is met from funds provided by a local public agency, including funds contributed to a local public agency by a private agency, organization or individual;
2. services are likely to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments; and
3. state, for purposes other than the establishment of a community rehabilitation program or the construction of a particular facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, requests in Attachment 4.7(b)(3) a waiver of the statewideness requirement in accordance with the following requirements:
 - A. identification of the types of services to be provided;
 - B. written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the state unit the nonfederal share of funds;
 - C. written assurance that state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
 - D. written assurance that all other State Plan requirements, including a state's order of selection, will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

(c) Contributions, consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.60(b)(3)(ii), by private entities of earmarked funds for particular geographic areas within the state may be used as part of the nonfederal share

without the state requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement provided that the state notifies the commissioner that it cannot provide the full nonfederal share without using the earmarked funds.

4.8 Cooperation, collaboration and coordination. (Sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23, .24, and .31, and 363.11(e))

(a) Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide work force investment system.

The designated state agency or the designated state unit has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide work force investment system and replicates those agreements at the local level between individual offices of the designated state unit and local entities carrying out the One-Stop service delivery system or other activities through the statewide work force investment system.

(b) Cooperation and coordination with other agencies and entities.

Attachment 4.8(b) (1)-(4) describes the designated state agency's:

1. cooperation with and use of the services and facilities of the federal, state, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs, to the extent that those agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide work force investment system;
2. coordination, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.8(c) of this section, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;
3. establishment of cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.10(b) of the State Plan; and,
4. efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and entities with respect to the provision of supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of subsection 6.5 of the supplement to this State Plan.

(c) Coordination with education officials.

1. Attachment 4.8(b)(2) describes the plans, policies and procedures for coordination between the designated state agency and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students who are individuals with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under the responsibility of the designated state agency.

2. The State Plan description must:

- A. provide for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45 as early as possible during the transition planning process but, at the latest, before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting; and
- B. include information on a formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:
 - i. consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to postschool activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
 - ii. transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and the educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
 - iii. roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
 - iv. procedures for outreach to students with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

(d) Coordination with statewide independent living council and independent living centers.

The designated state unit, the Statewide Independent Living Council established under Section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 366 have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.

(e) Cooperative agreement with recipients of grants for services to American Indians.

- 1. **X** There is in the state a recipient(s) of a grant under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near federal and state reservations.
- 2. If "Yes", the designated state agency has entered into a formal cooperative agreement that meets the following requirements with each grant recipient in the state that receives funds under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act:

- A. strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that will assist in eligibility determinations and the development of individualized plans for employment;
- B. procedures for ensuring that American Indians who are individuals with disabilities and are living near a reservation or tribal service area are provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
- C. provisions for sharing resources in cooperative studies and assessments, joint training activities, and other collaborative activities designed to improve the provision of services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities.

4.9 Methods of administration. (Section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and .51(a) and (b))

(a) In general.

The state agency employs methods of administration, including procedures to ensure accurate data collection and financial accountability, found by the commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the plan and for carrying out all the functions for which the state is responsible under the plan and 34 CFR 361.

(b) Employment of individuals with disabilities.

The designated state agency and entities carrying out community rehabilitation programs in the state, who are in receipt of assistance under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and this State Plan, take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities covered under and on the same terms and conditions as set forth in Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act.

(c) Facilities.

Any facility used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State Plan meets program accessibility requirements consistent with the provisions, as applicable, of the Architectural Barriers Rehabilitation Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations implementing these laws.

4.10 Comprehensive system of personnel development. (Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.18)

Attachment 4.10 describes the designated state agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified state rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated state unit. The description includes the following:

(a) Data system on personnel and personnel development.

Development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development with respect to:

1. Qualified personnel needs.
 - A. The number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
 - B. The number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
 - C. Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in five years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.
2. Personnel development.
 - A. A list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
 - B. The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
 - C. The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

(b) Plan for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel.

Development, updating on an annual basis, and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel based on the data collection and analysis system described in paragraph (a) of this subsection and that provides for the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare and retain personnel who are qualified in accordance with paragraph (c) of this subsection, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

(c) Personnel standards.

Policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including:

1. standards that are consistent with any national- or state-approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services.
2. To the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the state plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, the institutions of higher education identified in subparagraph (a)(2), and other public agencies of these steps and the time lines for taking each step.
3. The written plan required by subparagraph (c)(2) describes the following:
 - A. specific strategies for retraining, recruiting and hiring personnel;
 - B. the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards required by subparagraph (c)(1);
 - C. procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period; and
 - D. the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards and the identification of a plan for training such individuals to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

(d) Staff development.

Policies, procedures and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training. The narrative describes the following:

1. A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement and rehabilitation technology.
2. Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

(e) Personnel to address individual communication needs.

Availability of personnel within the designated state unit or obtaining the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible

individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

(f) Coordination of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4.11. Statewide assessment; annual estimates; annual state goals and priorities; strategies; and progress reports.

(Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.17(h)(2), .29, and 363.11(b))

(a) Comprehensive statewide assessment.

1. Attachment 4.11(a) documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted every three years by the designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the state has such a council). The assessment describes:
 - A. the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:
 - i. individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
 - ii. individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this State Plan; and
 - iii. individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide work force investment system.
 - B. The need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.
2. For any year in which the state updates the assessments, the designated state unit submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding updates to the assessments.

(b) Annual estimates.

Attachment 4.11(b) identifies on an annual basis state estimates of the:

1. number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services under the plan;

2. number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under Part B of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection in accordance with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of this State Plan, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order; and
3. costs of the services described in subparagraph (b)(1), including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.

(c) Goals and priorities.

1. Attachment 4.11(c)(1) identifies the goals and priorities of the state that are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
2. The designated state agency submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the state revises the goals and priorities.
3. Order of selection.
If the state agency implements an order of selection, consistent with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of the State Plan, Attachment 4.11(c)(3):
 - A. shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
 - B. provides a justification for the order; and
 - C. identifies the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
4. Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds.
Attachment 4.11(c)(4) specifies, consistent with subsection 6.4 of the State Plan supplement, the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

(d) Strategies.

1. Attachment 4.11(d) describes the strategies, including:
 - A. the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities, including how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to those individuals at each stage of the rehabilitation process

and how those services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis;

- B. outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities in accordance with subsection 6.6 of the State Plan supplement, and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;
 - C. as applicable, the plan of the state for establishing, developing or improving community rehabilitation programs;
 - D. strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
 - E. strategies for assisting other components of the statewide work force investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.
2. Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the designated state agency uses these strategies to:
- A. address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph 4.11(a) and achieve the goals and priorities identified in the State Plan attachments under paragraph 4.11(c);
 - B. support the innovation and expansion activities identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) of the plan; and
 - C. overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program.

(e) Evaluation and reports of progress.

- 1. The designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state unit has a council, jointly submits to the commissioner an annual report on the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year.
- 2. Attachment 4.11(e)(2):
 - A. provides an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3) were achieved;
 - B. identifies the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals and priorities;

- C. describes the factors that impeded their achievement, to the extent they were not achieved;
- D. assesses the performance of the state on the standards and indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
- E. provides a report consistent with paragraph 4.12(c) of the plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

4.12 Innovation and expansion. (Section 101(a)(18) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.35)

(a) The designated state agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the:

1. development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this State Plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment identified in Attachment 4.11(a) and goals and priorities of the state identified in Attachments 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3); and
2. support of the funding for the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 105(d)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(i), and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 705(e)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364.21(i).

(b) Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the reserved funds identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) will be utilized.

(c) Attachment 4.11(e)(2) describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

4.13 Reports. (Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.40)

(a) The designated state unit submits reports in the form and level of detail and at the time required by the commissioner regarding applicants for and eligible individuals receiving services under the State Plan.

(b) Information submitted in the reports provides a complete count, unless sampling techniques are used, of the applicants and eligible individuals in a manner that permits the greatest possible cross-classification of data and protects the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

Section 5: Administration of the Provision of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

5.1 Information and referral services. (Sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.37)

The designated state agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who do not meet the agency's order of selection criteria for receiving vocational rehabilitation services if the agency is operating on an order of selection, are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, including counseling and referral for job placement, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining or regaining employment, and are referred to other appropriate federal and state programs, including other components of the statewide work force investment system in the state.

5.2 Residency. (Section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.42(c)(1))

The designated state unit imposes no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the state.

5.3 Ability to serve all eligible individuals; order of selection for services. (Sections 12(d) and 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.36)

(a) The designated state unit is able to provide the full range of services listed in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services. Yes

(b) If No:

1. Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with criteria established by the state, are selected first for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.
2. Attachment 4.11(c)(3):
 - A. shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
 - B. provides a justification for the order of selection; and
 - C. identifies the state's service and outcome goals and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
3. Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria have access to the services provided through the designated state unit's information and referral system established under Section 101(a)(20) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.37, and subsection 5.1 of this State Plan.

5.4 Availability of comparable services and benefits. (Sections 101(a)(8) and 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.53)

(a) Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services, except those services identified in paragraph (b), to an eligible individual or to members of the individual's family, the state unit determines whether comparable services and benefits exist under any other program and whether those services and benefits are available to the individual.

(b) The following services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits:

1. assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;
2. counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act;
3. referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide work force investment system, through agreements developed under Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act, if such services are not available under this State Plan;
4. job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
5. rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices; and
6. post-employment services consisting of the services listed under subparagraphs (1) through (5) of this paragraph.

(c) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section do not apply if the determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits under any other program would interrupt or delay:

1. progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
2. an immediate job placement; or
3. provision of vocational rehabilitation services to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.

(d) The governor in consultation with the designated state vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the requirements of Section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Rehabilitation Act takes effect between the designated state unit and any appropriate public entity, including the state Medicaid program, a public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide work force investment system to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, other than the services identified in paragraph (b) of this section, that are included in

the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of those vocational rehabilitation services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

5.5 Individualized plan for employment. (Section 101(a)(9) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.45 and .46)

(a) An individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and implemented in a timely manner for each individual determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, except if the state has implemented an order of selection, and is developed and implemented for each individual to whom the designated state unit is able to provide vocational rehabilitation services.

(b) Services to an eligible individual are provided in accordance with the provisions of the individualized plan for employment.

5.6 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers. (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.52)

Applicants and eligible individuals or, as appropriate, their representatives are provided information and support services to assist in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.52.

5.7 Services to American Indians. (Section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.30)

The designated state unit provides vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the state to the same extent as the designated state agency provides such services to other significant populations of individuals with disabilities residing in the state.

5.8 Annual review of individuals in extended employment or other employment under special certificate provisions of the fair labor standards act of 1938. (Section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.55)

(a) The designated state unit conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State Plan:

1. who has achieved an employment outcome in which the individual is compensated in accordance with Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)); or
2. whose record of services is closed while the individual is in extended employment on the basis that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome in an integrated setting or that the individual made an informed choice to remain in extended employment.

(b) The designated state unit carries out the annual review and reevaluation for two years after the individual's record of services is closed (and thereafter if requested by the individual or, if appropriate, the

individual's representative) to determine the interests, priorities and needs of the individual with respect to competitive employment or training for competitive employment.

(c) The designated state unit makes maximum efforts, including the identification and provision of vocational rehabilitation services, reasonable accommodations and other necessary support services, to assist the individuals described in paragraph (a) in engaging in competitive employment.

(d) The individual with a disability or, if appropriate, the individual's representative has input into the review and reevaluation and, through signed acknowledgement, attests that the review and reevaluation have been conducted.

5.9 Use of Title I funds for construction of facilities. (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), .61 and .62(b))

If the state elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs, the following requirements are met:

(a) The federal share of the cost of construction for facilities for a fiscal year does not exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the state's allotment under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for that fiscal year.

(b) The provisions of Section 306 of the Rehabilitation Act that were in effect prior to the enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 apply to such construction.

(c) There is compliance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.62(b) that ensure the use of the construction authority will not reduce the efforts of the designated state agency in providing other vocational rehabilitation services other than the establishment of facilities for community rehabilitation programs.

5.10 Contracts and cooperative agreements. (Section 101(a)(24) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.31 and .32)

(a) Contracts with for-profit organizations.

The designated state agency has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing, as vocational rehabilitation services, on-the-job training and related programs for individuals with disabilities under Part A of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, upon the determination by the designated state agency that for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide vocational rehabilitation services than nonprofit agencies and organizations.

(b) Cooperative agreements with private nonprofit organizations.

Attachment 4.8(b)(3) describes the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

Section 6: Program Administration

6.1 Designated state agency. (Section 625(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(a))

The designated state agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in paragraph 1.2 of the Title I State Plan is the state agency designated to administer the State Supported Employment Services Program authorized under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs. (Section 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))

Attachment 4.11(a) describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under Section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and subparagraph 4.11(a)(1) of the Title I State Plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.

6.3 Quality, scope and extent of supported employment services. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(c) and .50(b)(2))

Attachment 6.3 describes the quality, scope and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive supported employment services. The description also addresses the timing of the transition to extended services to be provided by relevant state agencies, private nonprofit organizations or other sources following the cessation of supported employment service provided by the designated state agency.

6.4 Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(d) and .20)

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) identifies the state's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.5 Evidence of collaboration with respect to supported employment services and extended services. (Sections 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(e))

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) describes the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services and other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within the state, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to the provision of extended services.

6.6 Minority outreach. (34 CFR 363.11(f))

Attachment 4.11(d) includes a description of the designated state agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

6.7 Reports. (Sections 625(b)(8) and 626 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(h) and .52)

The designated state agency submits reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the commissioner may require and collects the information required by Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under Part B, of Title VI and individuals receiving supported employment services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 7: Financial Administration

7.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs. (Section 625(b)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(8))

The designated state agency expends no more than five percent of the state's allotment under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for administrative costs in carrying out the State Supported Employment Services Program.

7.2 Use of funds in providing services. (Sections 623 and 625(b)(6)(A) and (D) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.6(c)(2)(iv), .11(g)(1) and (4))

(a) Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act are used by the designated state agency only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive such services.

(b) Funds provided under Title VI, Part B, are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act, in providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.

(c) Funds provided under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 8: Provision of Supported Employment Services

8.1 Scope of supported employment services. (Sections 7(36) and 625(b)(6)(F) and (G) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54), 363.11(g)(6) and (7))

(a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in Section 7(36) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54).

(b) To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site.

(c) Supported employment services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.

8.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities. (Sections 7(2)(B) and 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 361.5(b)(6)(ii) and 363.11(g)(2))

The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under Section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.

8.3 Individualized plan for employment. (Sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 625(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.46(b) and 363.11(g)(3) and (5))

(a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and updated using funds under Title I.

(b) The individualized plan for employment:

1. specifies the supported employment services to be provided;
2. describes the expected extended services needed; and
3. identifies the source of extended services, including natural supports, or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment plan is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available.

(c) Services provided under an individualized plan for employment are coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other federal or state programs.

Screen 3 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.2(c) Input of State Rehabilitation Council

Required annually by all agencies except those agencies that are independent consumer-controlled commissions.

Identify the Input provided by the state rehabilitation council, including recommendations from the council's annual report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other council reports. Be sure to also include:

- the Designated state unit's response to the input and recommendations; and
- explanations for the designated state unit's rejection of any input or recommendation of the council.

The State of Alaska has a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) consistent with Section 105 the Act and 34 CFR 361.17. In Alaska, the Governors Committee on Employment and Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities (GCERPD) serves as the SRC. The GCERPD holds quarterly face-to-face meetings at various locations throughout the State thus enabling them to gain a comprehensive, first hand understanding of the statewide vocational rehabilitation program.

Recommendations made to DVR:

The SRC made the following recommendations to DVR:

1. DVR purchase technology to provide face-to-face delivery of services through video conferencing to consumers who reside in rural and remote areas of the state.

DVR's Response: DVR is working with Aleyska Vocational Services to investigate the procurement and use of video phones to be used with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. DVR will investigate the availability of video conferencing for State agency use through the state and will report back to the SRC by January 2010. DVR does not have the resources, even with the stimulus money, to purchase the required video conferencing equipment and bandwidth or to provide the necessary on-going support of such a system. DVR is supportive of improving the service delivery system to individuals living in rural and remote areas of the state.

2. Provide low-vision training to counselors and upcoming counselors who will provide services to individuals who are blind or have visual impairments.

DVR's Response: DVR has provided training and been active in ensuring that VR staff are able to serve those who are blind or visually impaired. The Vocational Evaluation staff will receive training to work with this population. DVR supports the efforts of the Statewide Blind Service Coordinator to ensure that all staff have the basic knowledge to serve those who are blind, and that more intensive training is provided to the regional specialists.

3. Develop additional CRPs in rural areas of the state.

DVR's Response: DVR has provided funds to assist CRPs to attend training. Counselors who serve rural Alaska are constantly trying to develop new CRPs, working with school teachers and other individuals who are active in their communities. We have developed curriculum for CRPs and are working with a University of Montana, University of Alaska Center for Human Development and the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education to recruit and train CRPs in rural Alaska. Several activities are underway regarding transition services.

4. Provide opportunities for teachers who reside in rural areas of the state to participate in DVR summer internships.

DVR's Response: DVR has offered internship opportunities to Special Education teachers for a number of years. We have recruited, but have not had any teachers from rural areas apply to participate. Follow up suggests that some teachers are reluctant to participate because participation in an internship would require them to relocate for four to six weeks. They report that their summer break is important time for them focus to their own personal and family needs that often go unaddressed due to the school schedule and workload demands. Data also indicates there is high turnover in the teaching positions in rural areas, especially in special education positions.

DVR will work with districts and participate in transition camps to identify teachers who have longevity in their positions and investment in the communities. The largest expense of these internships is not the payment to teachers but rather the allocation of DVR staff time. For this reason, we must focus on rural areas where we can impact the greatest number of students. We agree with this recommendation and will work to identify and address barriers that may have hindered participation by teachers from rural areas.

Analysis of Consumer Satisfaction

In accordance with 34 CFR 361.17 (h) (4), the GCERPD conducted a review and analysis of the effectiveness of and the consumer satisfaction with the vocational rehabilitation services. The consumer satisfaction information was collected through a mail out survey to all closed cases. There was a 24% response rate. Public forums and surveys which are available in all VR offices statewide to all individuals at any time during the VR process were also collected but not analyzed.

A survey was mailed to all DVR consumers whose cases were closed during FFY2008 after having received services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This report summarizes the results of those surveys.

Key Findings

" 863 surveys were mailed; 24% or 186 consumers responded.

" 90% of respondents were willing to refer either friends or family to DVR.

" 85% reported they were aware of the Client Assistance Program (CAP) which represents a 21% increase from the FFY2007 survey.

Overall satisfaction with VR services was at 85%, an increase from FFY2007. Those respondents who left employed expressed an 88% satisfaction with DVR while those who left unemployed rated their satisfaction at 73%.

The most positive responses were in the areas of understanding the purpose of DVR, their treatment, and their involvement in choosing their vocational goal and services.

The top three items respondents reported they liked about their experience with DVR are: (1) the relationship with their VR counselor, (2) the help they received, and (3) the DVR program in general.

12% of the respondents reported what they disliked the most about their experience with DVR was the time required to move through the VR process.

The results were skewed slightly towards urban and employed consumers. The urban consumers greatly out-number those from the other areas. Those consumers who were employed after VR services responded at higher rate than those were unemployed.

Throughout the past fiscal year, the GCERPD has:

1. Collaborated with DVR on the development of the State Plan. The Chair of the GCERPD and the Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation are co-signatories on the State Plan;
2. Conducted public forums in both urban and rural areas of the State garnering consumer satisfaction with the services of DVR;
3. Participated in DVR's strategic planning process giving input on the divisions goals and strategies;
4. Set goals for its various sub-committees to further the mission of DVR;
5. Advised DVR on the development of and implementation of revisions to DVR policies and procedures;
6. Provided recommendations to DVR on its use of stimulus funds;
7. Collaborated with the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education and the State Independent Living Council, (SILC) and identified legislative priorities.
8. Conducted outreach efforts to recruit new members to the GCERPD.
9. In partnership with the division, analyzed and disseminated the results of a consumer satisfaction survey.
10. In partnership with the division, conducted and analyzed the results of a statewide needs assessment.
11. Recognized individuals and businesses that made a meaningful difference in the employment of people with disabilities.

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.7(b)(3) Request for Waiver of Statewideness

Identify the types of services to be provided by the program for which the waiver of statewideness is requested.

The waiver request should also include:

- a written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the designated state unit the non-federal share of funds;
- a written assurance that designated state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect;
- a written assurance that all state plan requirements will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.8(b)(1) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system with respect to

- Federal, state, and local agencies and programs;
- if applicable, Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture; and
- if applicable, state use contracting programs.

1. DVR works closely with the Coordinated Resources Project (CRP) which is also known as the Anchorage Mental Health Court. The mission of the CRP is to divert people with mental disabilities charged with misdemeanor offenses from incarceration and into community treatment and services including mental health counseling and vocational rehabilitation as appropriate in order to prevent further contacts with the criminal justice system.

2. DVR and the Employment Security Division are in the process of developing an interagency agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Division. This agreement provides for the cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among the agencies to increase the vocational opportunities for veterans by including other vocational rehabilitation providers in a comprehensive system of case management.

3. DVR is a member of the Alaska Tribal and State Consortium of Vocational Rehabilitation Programs.

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Screen 6 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.8(b)(2) Coordination with Education Officials

- Describe the designated state unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, including provisions for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.
- Provide information on the formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency with respect to
 - consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;
 - transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs;
 - roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
 - procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has cooperative agreements with all levels of educational institutions within the State including local school districts, the State Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), and the University of Alaska statewide system. The purpose of these agreements is to outline the responsibilities of all entities involved with either the transition from high school or the education of those individuals with disabilities.

1. The Department of Education and Early Development, Division of Special Education and DVR have an interagency agreement which is designed to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services.

The agreement includes:

- DVR's assurance of the development and implementation of an IPE for each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services before the student leaves school.
- Designation of a regional DVR contact that is responsible for clarifying questions and concerns relating to the implementation of the agreements with local school districts.
- DVR's assurance that the core tenets, principles, and career goals stated in each student's IEP will be incorporated into the development of their Individualized Plan for Employment.

DVR also has an agreement with DEED whereby DEED funds DVR summer internships for special education teachers.

2. DVR has memorandums of understanding or cooperative agreements with all of Alaska's fifty-four school districts.

The purpose of the agreements is to provide comprehensive, coordinated services to meet the special educational transitioning needs of students age 16 to 22. Through interagency planning the intention is to eliminate duplication of services, promote the most efficient use of resources, clarify agency roles and responsibilities, and offer quality transitioning plans thereby assuring continuous, well-coordinated services for young adults and their families.

The agreements address:

- Referrals to DVR;
- The assessment responsibilities of the schools and DVR;
- The programmatic responsibilities each party has, such as the school's role in educating the students with disabilities through the age of twenty-one and DVR's role in providing technical assistance to the schools for IEP development and when appropriate, vocational support; and
- The financial responsibilities of the schools and DVR.

3. DVR has a memorandum of understanding with the University of Alaska statewide system delineating the responsibilities of each entity regarding individuals with disabilities who are served by DVR and who are enrolled as students within the University of Alaska statewide system.

The agreement includes:

- The roles of each party;
- The financial and programmatic responsibilities
- The legal basis for the agreement; and
- The method for resolving disputes.

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Screen 7 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.8(b)(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

Describe the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

DVR has signed agreements with community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) to provide specific vocational rehabilitation services. Only CRPs who meet the qualifications described in the DVR Standards for Community Rehabilitation Programs and have a signed agreement with DVR are eligible to provide such services. The agreements are renewed every three (3) years.

The Service provider application:

- Requires a background check as well as the education and employment experience of all employees working with DVR consumers.
- Fees for services.
- Outlines the conditions and guidelines under which the division and the service provider will provide services for individuals with disabilities specifying the responsibilities of each party, the scope of services, the evaluation criteria, and reporting and billing requirements.
- Outlines standards for service providers including: organizational structure, personnel; fiscal management; health, safety, and accessibility; and indemnity and insurance requirements.

The CRP Specialist is responsible for approving the Agreements. Changes in key personnel and fees are reported to and negotiated with DVR.

Following the principles of informed choice, information on the CRPs including their services and fees are available to DVR's consumers and are posted on DVR's internet.

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Screen 8 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

Describe the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide the following services to individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- supported employment services; and
- extended services.

Collaborative efforts exist between DVR, the Division of Behavioral Health, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, the University of Alaska Affiliated program (the Center for Human Development), and the Division of Senior and Disability Services (DSDS) to provide extended services to those supported employment consumers leaving the VR program.

The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education functions as the State Council on Developmental Disabilities and works to build capacity, plans for systems change, and advocates for change for people with disabilities. System change focuses on system changes include housing, employment, early intervention, special education, lifelong learning, independent living and inclusion in the community. DVR's Chief of Rehabilitation Services is an active member of this council.

DSDS maintains the developmentally disabled register which is in essence the wait list for long term support services. DVR is in the process of renewing a memorandum of understanding with DSDS.

The Mental Health Board and the Governor's Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Abuse have combined to plan and advocate for policies, programs and services that help Alaskans who have a mental illness or substance abuse issues. DVR has a staff member on this board.

In addition, DVR has an on-going commitment to quality supported employment services as evidenced by the recent formation of a high level committee including the DVR Chief of Rehabilitation Services and the Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Disabilities to evaluate the current level of supported employment services available. DVR has sustained the principles of the system change customized employment grant that focused on wrap-around services for the most severely disabled.

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State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program

and

State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)

Attachment 4.10 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

1. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

- the number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
- the number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
- projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

DVR currently has 101 staff positions. Field staff are comprised of 44 counselors, 29 assistants and 2 vocational evaluators and 5 VR managers. Management, administrative and other support staff account for the remaining positions. In FFY2009 DVR served 3908 clients and feel that we have adequate personnel to serve all Alaskans with disabilities and have adequate staff in each personnel category.

DVR has seen consistent turnover this past year although not as high as in recent years. Most of the turnover has been due to personnel leaving the field for various reasons and not retirement. Personnel turnover is as follows: 16% DVR counselors, 20% VR assistants, no VR managers departed the agency.

Given the economic uncertainty that exists, DVR is finding it difficult to use historical information to make staffing projections. On average, approximately thirty percent of division employees will be eligible to retire within the next five years. The division anticipates higher

overall employee turnover including employee departure for other reasons along with employee retirement.

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	44	5	15
2	Vocational Rehabilitation Assistant	29	1	8
3	Vocational Rehabilitation Evaluator	2	0	1
4	Vocational Rehabilitation Managers	5	0	2
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

2. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

- a list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
- the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
- the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

Alaska does not have an institution of higher education that offers rehabilitation coursework leading to a Master degree. The University of Alaska offers programs leading to Human Services Applied Associates and Bachelor degrees. DVR paraprofessional staff enrolls in programs through this institution on a regular basis. DVR has and continues to support DVR staff in distance education graduate programs in rehabilitation counseling in order to meet the CRC certification requirements.

Row	Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development (updated on an annual basis) and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the Coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

DVR evaluates our personnel needs annually as part of our strategic planning and successions planning processes. Positions are not automatically filled when they become vacant. The leadership team evaluates division and client needs across the state prior to filling vacant positions. The specific lack of higher education programs in the state has created challenges for the recruitment of qualified rehabilitation counselors. Out-of-state recruitment is also challenging due to personnel rules.

DVR utilizes several recruitment strategies in addition to provisional hire for people with disabilities. One of the more successful strategies is to hire entry or journey level rehabilitation counselors who are highly supervised and have limited authority and assist them in obtaining the education and certification required to become a qualified rehabilitation counselor. This same strategy is often successful with paraprofessional staff as well. DVR also recruits from Tribal VR programs, community rehabilitation and social service programs. DVR also offers paid or non-paid internships to rehabilitation counseling graduate students interested in relocating to Alaska and has also participated in the Region X recruitment initiative.

Alaska relies upon educational institutions that deliver their curriculum via distance education. Relationships with educational institutions change based upon staff enrollment. DVR has recently developed a positive working relationship with West Virginia University (WVU). DVR wrote a letter of support for WVU's grant application for the CSPD Training Grant, along with several other rehabilitation education programs. Positive relationships continue with Western Washington University, University of Arkansas, Little Rock and Texas Tech University, University of Wisconsin-Stout and University of Kentucky.

Staff recruitment is conducted in accordance with the provisions of Title I of the Americans with

Disabilities Act. The State of Alaska employment statutes provide for provisional hire which allows DVR, as well as other state agencies, an additional opportunity to take affirmative action to employ individuals with disabilities.

In addition to our normal in-state recruitment, DVR has expanded its recruitment efforts. Vacancies are also posted with the University of Alaska's Career Services Center, Rehab Jobs, Pacific Northwest Center for Continuing Education (CCER) and Hot Jobs through Yahoo and direct contact with educational institutions, such as Texas Tech University and Western Oregon University for specialty positions.

Personnel Standards

Describe the state agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

1. standards that are consistent with any national or state-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services; and
2. to the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the State Plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, institutions of higher education, and other public agencies of these steps and the timelines for taking each step.

Be sure to include the following:

- specific strategies for retraining, recruiting, and hiring personnel;
- the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards;
- procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period;
- the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards;
- the identification of a plan for training newly hired personnel who do not meet the established standards to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

The State of Alaska does not require State licensure requirements for rehabilitation counseling, therefore, DVR has adopted the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC)

academic degree requirements.

The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) requires DVR to establish personnel standards that assure personnel are adequately prepared and trained. Strategies developed by DVR to ensure the retraining, recruiting and hiring of personnel include:

- Attendance at local job/career fairs;
- Formation of an in-house training and staff development team;
- Offering paid and non-paid graduate internships;
- Supporting rehabilitation counseling as an employment goal for clients;
- Supporting staff to obtain the academic requirements by CRC;
- Providing CRC accredited training to maintain CRC certification and to provide for general staff development;
- Utilizes the training resources and support of the Pacific Northwest Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Center (TACE) and the Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation (CCER);
- Presentations to graduate level counseling students at local university; and
- The development of a career advancement system that integrates educational and credentialing required and measures knowledge and skills in hiring and promotional consideration. This system is consistent with the national certification of rehabilitation counselors.

DVR continues to closely monitor those counselors who currently do not meet the divisions CSPD personnel standard. All staff who do not meet the standard have Employee Development Plans (EDPs) which specifically outline their professional development requirements and completion deadlines. All existing staff are required to meet the standard by 2014. Staff who currently do not meet the standard require additional supervision and review of all non-delegable functions including eligibility determination, plan and plan amendment approval, and determination of successful employment outcome. In addition, DVR expects that newly hired personnel who do not meet the CRC academic requirements will do so within six years of employment. During this six year period, these employees are closely supervised by CRCs and are not considered rehabilitation professionals. At a minimum, newly hired personnel must have a Bachelors degree.

As part of DVR's strategic planning process, an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of DVR's recruitment and training practices is completed. Strategies to improve recruitment and training are identified and incorporated in the plan.

Staff Development

Describe the state agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

1. a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology; and
2. procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

Annual comprehensive human resource training and development plans are based on the needs assessment process, budget availability, new federal initiatives, and outcomes of program evaluations. Needs assessment includes information from individual and regional case reviews, client satisfaction surveys and consumer forums, performance appraisals, performance skill rating tools, employee staff development plans, organizational plans, CAP annual reports and supervisor and employee training needs surveys. Each individual in the agency has an employee development plan that is updated on a regular basis. As part of the process, data is compiled by the training specialist and used in determining group and individual training activities.

In-service training recently delivered to all staff includes:

- Job Retention thru Good Benefits Planning Practices
- Unraveling the Mysteries of Social Security Disability
- Employment Counseling with Individuals with
- Personality Disorders
- Job Development and Placement
- Substance Abuse and VR;
- Ticket to Work Incentives;

Other training activities included:

- Assistive Technology Conference
- New CRCC Code of Ethics
- Alaska Career Information System Training (Career exploration & assessment techniques)
- Emerging Leaders
- Orientation to Leadership & Management
- Annual School on Addictions and Behavioral Health

Training activities for DVR staff are also coordinated with WIA partners through Job Centers and with Tribal VR. There is a statewide training team of Job Center participants of which DVR is a member. DVR staff are trained on issues affecting our clients such as individualized training accounts. DVR in turn has provided training to Job Center partners on assistive technology and disability related issues.

To keep counselors and paraprofessionals current on the latest research and enhance their knowledge-base, on-going training is available. Much of the training is delivered via teleconferences primarily from the Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation, University of Washington. CRC credit is available for these trainings and recent topics have included:

- Traumatic Brain Injury and Other Neurological Conditions;

- Self-employment initiatives;
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors.

Annually, staff receive training from medical professionals on the medical aspects of disabilities such as mental health issues, diabetes, heart disease, etc. DVR also trains staff annually through regional trainings on new initiatives and changes in the law. The training team utilizes information from entities and organizations such as The Institute on Rehabilitation Issues, The National Rehabilitation Association, and the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association.

Additionally, members of the Training and Staff Development Team maintain relations with the CCER and Pacific Northwest TACE based at the University of Washington. This program provides training on current issues and research such as performance based outcomes.

Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

Describe how the designated state unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

The Division employs a full-time staff member who is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) to facilitate communication with the deaf and hard of hearing consumers and staff. The Division also supports staff to gain skills in ASL to increase the number of staff who are able to communicate with consumers who are deaf. Tele-interpreting is also widely used. When possible, consumers with specific language skills are referred to staff possessing those secondary language skills. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development has a list of fluent interpreters for in-demand languages such as Tagalog, Russian and Spanish. Staff will also solicit the services from a qualified language interpreter when needed. The Division relies heavily on the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs to coach our staff on the cultural appropriate methods of communication with our Alaska native consumers.

Coordination of Personnel Development Under the individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act.

DVR consistently collaborates with the State of Alaska, Department of Education on numerous staff development and training initiatives. We currently participate in:

1. Teacher Internship Project.

During the summer months, school district transition/special education teachers from around the state participate in a 125 hour paid, structured training program to learn about DVR.

In FY2010, three teachers from Fairbanks and Juneau participated. Teachers are teamed with a VR counselor to:

- Learn about VR orientation, eligibility, plan development and case closure;
- Observe VR counselors meeting with clients;
- Learn about eligibility criteria, disabling barriers, and the array of VR services; and
- Participate in vocational evaluations in order to broaden their knowledge of assessment tools.

DVR counselors and special education teachers from across Alaska have formed teams to improve transition services for students with disabilities. The Teacher Internship Project is a key initiative designed to strengthen these teams. As a result:

- Students will be able to receive a continuation of services not usually available during the summer months.
- Teachers will increase their knowledge of vocational rehabilitation and will share this knowledge with their peers.
- DVR will benefit from a more collaborative working relationship with special education staff which will allow it to better serve students transitioning from school to work or post-school activities.

2. DVR Transition Services.

DVR and local school districts throughout Alaska work together, in conjunction with students and their families, to coordinate activities that will result in successful employment outcomes. These transition services are designed to facilitate a high school students smooth transfer from school to agencies such as the DVR.

Currently, DVR counselors are assigned to work with specific schools and/or school districts. They work in the schools on an itinerate basis. Rural or village schools may work with VR counselors via telephonically and through the special education teacher.

The transition coordinator holds monthly teleconferences with all VR counselors who work with youth. These calls allow counselors to share information; best practices or strategies that are working form them.

3. Statewide Special Education Conference.

Annually DVR registers VR counselors who work with youth to participate in this conference. This again provides an opportunity for VR counselors to learn about special education topics such as; disability topics, assistive technology, accommodations and support services and the requirements of IDEA and a plethora of other special education topics. DVR counselors also take the time to build and strengthen relationships with special education teachers and district staff.

4. Special Education Director Conference.

The DVR transition coordinator and the Chief of Rehabilitation Services participate in this conference annually. In addition to attending the conference, the transition coordinator has been a session presenter and maintains a vendor booth. This gives the school district special education directors an opportunity to learn more about VR services and establish relationships with special educators from the 53 different school districts in the state.

5. DVR's transition coordinator is a member of the following youth boards:

- Alaska Workforce Investment Board Youth Council
- Governor's Council on Disability and Special Education

This screen was last updated on May 13 2010 7:35PM by Jane McIntosh

Screen 10 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.11(a) Statewide Assessment

Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:

- individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
- individuals with disabilities who are minorities;
- individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; and
- individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system.

Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

Introduction

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) as part of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development is responsible for the administration and operation of Alaska's public

vocational rehabilitation program.

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended, Public Law 99-506, Section 101(a) requires each state vocational rehabilitation agency to conduct a comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) jointly with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) every three years. In Alaska, the Governor's Committee on the Employment and Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities functions as the SRC.

In federal fiscal years 2008 – 2009, DVR and the SRC designed and completed the CSNA using The VR Needs Assessment Guide developed by InfoUse for the Rehabilitation Services Administration. DVR staff was responsible for the data gathering and analysis and the writing of the CSNA report. The results of the CSNA will be used to develop goals, priorities, strategies and actions for both DVR's Strategic and State Plans.

Methodology

Key Research Questions

In accordance with federal regulations 34 CFR § 361.29, the focus of the data collection for the CSNA was on:

1. What are the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services?
2. What are the vocational rehabilitation services needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities or in unserved or underserved populations?
3. What are the vocational rehabilitation services needs of individuals with disabilities who are served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system?
4. What is the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) within the state?

Data Collection Methods

Multiple data sources were used to inform the CSNA, including on-line and direct mailed surveys; studies conducted by a variety of providers and advocacy groups focusing on services and barriers to employment; U.S. Census Bureau data; DVR participant data; and the SRC's community forums and public testimony. In an attempt to identify trends, five years worth of DVR participant information from FFY2004 – FFY2009 was used in the analysis.

Six separate survey instruments were used in the CSNA. When combined, the individuals surveyed collectively serve as an invaluable source of information and insight regarding the needs and challenges of Alaskans with disabilities.

The individuals surveyed included:

- DVR consumers with open cases (mailed June 2009);

- Consumer satisfaction of individuals closed after receiving services under an Individualized Plan of Employment (mailed monthly during FFY2008);
- Stakeholders/Public (on-line Survey Monkey June 2009);
- DVR staff: counselors and managers (on-line Survey Monkey August 2009);
- Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) (on-line Survey Monkey August 2009);
- Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Job Center staff (on-line Survey Monkey August 2009).

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. What are the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services?

DVR defines an individual with a significant disability as someone who:

- Receives SSDI/SSI benefits from the Social Security Administration or has a severe physical, mental or sensory impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities such as mobility, work skills, self-care, interpersonal skills, communication, self-direction, or work tolerance in terms of an employment outcome and requires multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

DVR defines an individual with a most significant disability as someone who:

has a severe physical, mental or sensory impairment that seriously limits three or more functional capacities such as mobility, work skills, self-care, interpersonal skills, communication, self-direction, or work tolerance in terms of an employment outcome and is a person with a significant disability.

DVR is not operating under an order of selection and is able to serve all eligible individuals.

In FFY09 individuals with a most significant disability accounted for 38% (1,380) of the individuals receiving services from DVR and for 39% (214) of those closed rehabilitated. Combined, individuals with both a significant and most significant disability equaled 94% (3,389) of all those receiving VR services and 92% (475) of those closed with an employment outcome earning greater or equal to the minimum wage.

Individuals with behavioral health and cognitive disabilities were the top two disability groups coded most significantly disabled at 40% and 56% respectively. Thirty-three percent (33%) of the individuals who have been sent a Ticket to Work have a psychiatric disorder and 10% have a developmental disability. At the end of December 2009, there were 447 individuals on the DD registry between the ages 18-64. The average length of time on the registry is 50 months. These two disability groups cross a variety of programs and represent the majority of individuals who are most significantly disabled. Many are also the individuals who are in need of on-going supports.

The lack of long term supported employment funding was one of the top three barriers to employment identified by DVR staff, CRPs and stakeholders and the need for behavioral health services was identified by both DVR staff and CRPs. Job Center staff commented that

individuals with behavioral health issues were the most difficult for them to serve. The need for increased long term supported employment services and for increased capacity in the behavioral health system for vocational programs is recognized by entities outside of DVR such as Division of Senior and Disability Services and the Governor's Council on Disability and Special Education.

Identified Need:

- On-going benefits analysis to understand the effect of work on medical and other benefits
- Increase long term supported employment services
- Increase behavioral health services through community health centers
- Increase vocational services in community behavioral health centers
- Reduce the time on the developmental disability registry
- Improve transportation services
- Increase opportunities for employment with state and federal government

Recommendation: Partner with other service providers to maximize resources and coordinate services for individuals who are in need of long term supported employment services as well as employment services from community behavioral health providers

Strategies:

- Ensure MOAs with appropriate state agencies are current and effective
- Work with SILC and CILs to increase the opportunities for the most severely disabled Alaskans to become employed
- Work with the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, the Alaska Mental Health Board, Community Behavioral Health programs, and the Trust to build the capacity to meet the employment needs and increase vocational programs within the behavioral health service delivery system
- Together with mental health centers identify barriers to providing vocational services
- Strengthen relationships with community behavioral health providers
- Encourage the development of employment networks to provide the long term support services for both supported employment and Social Security beneficiaries
- Be actively involved with initiatives proposed by other entities that could affect DVR and the VR service delivery
- Maintain a strong commitment to provide benefits analysis and counseling on an as needed basis throughout the VR process for those individuals on SSI/SSDI
- Use of SSA work incentives as part of benefits counseling

2. What are the vocational rehabilitation services needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities or who are in unserved or underserved populations?

DVR looked at population groups by disability types, age specific to transition youth and the elderly, rural Alaska, minorities and gender to assess unserved or underserved. Data comparisons included five year data sets of DVR participants and national data from the US Census Bureau and SSA. The DVR data also included a further reporting of successful closures versus those closed unsuccessfully to ascertain a potential bias in the delivery of services.

According to the data analysis, rural Alaska was the primary group identified as being underserved. DVR's definition of rural/non-rural is based on a community's access to VR counseling services. Rural is defined for the CSNA as a community that is not connected by road to a community where a DVR office is located or is at least 50 statute miles from a DVR office. Serving rural Alaska is challenging for all state agencies. A map of the state of Alaska superimposed over a map of the United States stretches from coast to coast. Alaska is also lacking roads in much of the state.

The Alaska Native population at 20% of all Alaskans is the largest minority group in the state with the majority (58%) of Natives living in rural Alaska. Therefore, even though DVR is not under serving Alaska Natives as 21% of all those served by DVR in FFY2009 were Alaska Natives, DVR strongly acknowledges that the needs of Alaska Natives are closely aligned with the needs of rural residents in general.

Alaska has 11 American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) grant programs. In Alaska these programs are known as Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) programs. The TVR programs provide rural services and have offices in many locations where DVR does not, but DVR remains obligated and committed to serving Natives and non-Natives alike who are living in rural areas.

Identified Need:

- More CRPs needed in rural Alaska for job placement and job support services
- Increased presence of VR counselors
- DVR and TVR staff share expertise
- More cases need to be shared between DVR and TVR
- VR counselors need a mechanism for sharing effective service strategies
- Strategies to reach and serve individuals who are not Alaska Natives but who live in rural Alaska
- Maximize use of technology for distance delivery of services (web cams, etc.)
- Contingency plans for potential loss of discretionary grants with TVR programs
- Options providing counselors with equipment and resources when traveling

Recommendation: Improve VR services in rural Alaska

Strategies:

- Create a work group of DVR counselors who serve rural areas to share effective service delivery strategies
- DVR and TVR staff share technical expertise
- Invite TVR staff to attend DVR sponsored trainings
- Maximize number of shared cases with TVR
- Assign counselors to serve primary or hub-communities and provide adequate travel funds
- DVR staff participate in rural employment camps
- Develop more CRPs in rural Alaska
- Identify strategies for serving individuals who are not Alaska Natives but whom live in rural Alaska
- Investigate use of technology for distance delivery of services (web cams, etc.)

- Develop contingency plan for potential loss of discretionary grants with TVR programs
- Evaluate options providing counselors with equipment and resources when traveling to effectively provide a high level of service to individuals with a disability

3. What are the vocational rehabilitation services needs of individuals with disabilities who are served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system?

DVR counseling offices are currently co-located in six One-Stop Job Centers around the state. Itinerant VR counselors rely on the other Job Centers when traveling to the outlying areas. DVR conducted surveys indicated rural Job Center staff would like more DVR support and more training in dealing with individuals with a behavioral health issue. DVR staff indicated Job Center staff would benefit from additional training on the services DVR provides and a DVR would also to see a more effective referral process developed.

DVR would also like to improve its services to transition age youth. In FFY2009, 22% of those served were youth with the estimated statewide population of this age group was at 16%. Even so, DVR believes services and outcomes for transition age youth could be improved.

Identified Need:

- A long range transition plan for the division
- DVR program information for schools and students needs to be evaluated
- Youth with physical disabilities or with other health impairments (504 students) are potentially underserved
- Almost one-third of students with an IEP are neither working nor in school after graduation
- Increase the rehabilitation rate for youth
- Job center staff, especially in rural areas, want more training on DVR services and medical issues
- Assistive technology in Job Centers requires on-going training and replacement
- All individuals who are receiving Job Training services and who self-identify as having an employment related disability are aware of DVR

Recommendation: Improve VR services for youth with disabilities as they transition from school to adult life

Strategies:

- Develop long range plan for transition services
- Determine most effective strategies/methods/time frame for informing schools about DVR services
- Develop outreach strategy for youth with other health impairments (504 students)
- Explore use of Twitter and Facebook to connect DVR services with youth
- VR staff have a positive presence at the annual Directors of Special Education conference
- Have a VR presence on workgroups both local and statewide associated with youth related initiatives
- Develop strategies to collaborate with businesses to assist youth with disabilities to obtain employment
- Increase the rehabilitation rate for youth

Recommendation: Improve services in job centers for Alaskans with disabilities

Strategies:

- Provide training on DVR services to rural job center staff
- Explore options for job center staff to be trained on various types of disabilities
- Explore options for supporting AT devices in job centers
- Support the reinstatement of the statewide Training Academy
- VR leadership team and VR managers continue to identify functional job center issues that require on-going work at all levels of the division
- VR continues to support initiatives in the job-centers such as the Disability Program Navigators and Start-up Alaska Self-employment
- Support strong partnerships to address cross-agency differences in policy and federal program requirements
- DVR staff provide long distance support to job center staff where DVR counselors travel on an itinerant basis
- Partner with the Division of Business Partnership to maximize the number of joint cases
- Ensure DVR contacts all individuals receiving Job Training services who self-identify as having an employment related disability
- Support the Employment Security Division to become an employment network
- Define role of DVR in job centers

4. What is the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs (CRP) within the state?

DVR continually assess the need to develop and improve CRPs within the state. It is an on-going challenge. DVR approves CRPs to deliver vocational rehabilitation related services when there is no other agency available to license the service. Traditionally most of the CRPs are small businesses. Currently 50% of the approved CRPs are single person operations. Only 26% of the VR counselors reported an adequate number of CRPS and 43% agreed the CRPS were adequately trained.

Eighty-nine percent (90%) of the CRPs are located in non-rural areas of the state although 77% of the CRPs indicate they are willing to travel to rural Alaska. Having consistent work for a CRP to have a successful business in rural areas is a challenge for DVR. The top two services purchased from CRPs are benefits counseling and on-the-job supports.

In FFY2009, DVR developed and began the implementation of CRP training and the dissemination of CRP services on the internet. DVR is interested in expanding the CRP information available to DVR participants as well as investigating an outcome/milestone payment system for CRPs.

Identified Need:

- Increase the number of CRPs providing job placement and job supports throughout the state
- Increase knowledge of CRPs through training opportunities
- Information on services provided by CRPs available to DVR participants

- Evaluate payments to CRPs in regards to milestones and/or outcomes
- Assess the specialized skills of CRPs to meet the needs of DVR participants either by occupation or disability
- Vocational programs missing in community behavioral health centers and providers of cognitively disabled services disabled services to develop vocational programs.

Recommendation: Enhance the CRP service delivery system through evaluation, training and development of new CRPs

Strategies

- Develop a work plan for the recruitment and training of CRPs
- Provide additional CRP information for DVR participants on the internet
- Develop more CRPs to serve rural areas with consideration given to local resources such as natural helpers, elders and teachers
- Develop orientation and training materials for VR staff about the use of CRPs
- Assess the specialized skills of CRPs to meet the needs of DVR participants either by occupation or disability
- Evaluate outcome/milestone or other payment systems for CRPs
- Develop documentation for staff maintenance of CRP information
- Encourage community behavioral health centers and providers of cognitively disabled services to develop vocational programs

This screen was last updated on May 12 2010 7:41PM by Jane McIntosh

Screen 11 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.11(b) Annual Estimates

- Identify the number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services.
- Identify the number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds under:
 - Part B of Title I;
 - Part B of Title VI;

- each priority category, if under an order of selection.
- Identify the cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

DVR was not operating under an Order of Selection during FFY2009. There was adequate funding and qualified staff to serve all eligible individuals. We anticipate this situation will continue, although we are beginning to see slight changes in applications and need that we believe are due to the changing economic times. DVR will continue to closely monitor expenditures and obligations in relationship to client numbers throughout the year as well as staffing patterns to ensure our ability to serve all eligible individuals.

Analysis of funding streams:

- The FY2011 Governor's budget beginning July 1, 2010 has DVR funded at FY2010 level for case services.

- Current Social Security receipts are slightly behind last year and are not expected to increase significantly in FY2011 based upon historical data. DVR continues an on-going effort to streamline and yet maximize the SSA Ticket-to-Work cost reimbursement process.

- There is adequate funding for supported employment services.

- With the State's acceptance of the economic stimulus monies, any concerns about going on an order of selection will be eliminated for FY2011.

DVR continues to distribute funds to the counselor/caseload level with oversight by regional managers. We believe this method of budgeting provides more accountability and better financial management by counselors, thus maximizing case service dollars.

Row		Title I or Title VI Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services
Category				
Eligible individuals receiving services - Title I	\$4,500,000	2,110	\$2,132	
Eligible individuals receiving services - Title VI	\$300,000	185	\$1,621	
			—	
			—	
			—	
			—	
			—	
			—	
			—	
			—	
Totals	\$4,800,000	2,295	\$2,091	

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.11(c)(1) State Goals and Priorities

The goals and priorities are based on the comprehensive statewide assessment, on requirements related to the performance standards and indicators, and on other information about the state agency. (See section 101(a)(15)(C) of the Act.) This attachment should be updated when there are material changes in the information that require the description to be amended.

- Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.
- Identify if the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, jointly reviewed the goals and priorities and jointly agreed to any revisions.
- Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:
 - the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
 - the performance of the state on standards and indicators; and
 - other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) developed goals and priorities for the state vocational rehabilitation (VR) program during the strategic planning process. This comprehensive process includes defining the mission, principles, goals, objectives, strategies and measurements. Input for the development of the goals and objectives came from the 2009 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), public comment at the SRC's quarterly meetings, and surveys of DVR's consumers, CRPs, WIA partners and stakeholders. Specific strategies to achieve these goals and objectives are detailed in Attachment 4.11(d).

Mission

The mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain and maintain employment.

Guiding Principles

DVR believes in:

- The empowering value of employment in an individual's life.
- Honoring and respecting each individual's strengths, skills, choices, abilities and cultural identity.
- Developing strong partnerships with Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs, schools, job-centers and centers for independent living.
- Delivering high quality vocational rehabilitation services.
- Employing and developing highly qualified and skilled rehabilitation staff.
- The principles of stewardship in the use of public resources.

Goal 1 Service Delivery: DVR will provide high quality services to all eligible individuals to assist them in obtaining employment consistent with their career goals.

Priorities:

- Transition services for youth with disabilities.
- Managing resources to stay off an order of selection
- Improving services in rural Alaska
- Improve services in job centers for people with disabilities
- Enhance the VR service delivery system through the use of technology
- Develop new CRPs and/or enhance delivery of CRP services

This goal reflects DVR's emphasis on continued improvement of VR services especially those individuals identified in the CSNA as being under served while managing to serve all eligible individuals by staying off an order of selection.

Goal 2 Staff Development: DVR will recruit, employ, retain and train the most qualified and highly skilled rehabilitation staff.

Priorities:

- Recruit and retain qualified staff
- Provide on-going training opportunities
- Support leadership development and succession planning

This goal reflects DVR's commitment to the CSPD standards as well as developing future leaders.

Goal 3 DVR will distinguish its role in the workforce system and will leverage partnerships to maximize resources and support for employment of individuals with disabilities.

Priorities:

- Partner with employers to promote the hiring of people with disabilities.
- Partner with other service providers to maximize resources and coordinate services especially for individuals who are in need of long term supported employment services and employment services from community behavioral health providers.

This goal reflects the need to partner and strengthen DVR's connection to other programs that serve people with disabilities. It is important for DVR to clearly communicate to others what we can do well, who we can serve, and how we can work collaboratively with others for the good of people with disabilities. This goal also reflects the support DVR can give to other programs in their efforts to gain additional resources, such as the additional support needed for extended services for supported employment consumers.

This screen was last updated on May 12 2010 7:41PM by Jane McIntosh

Screen 13 of 17

This attachment was originally submitted to RSA as part of a prior State Plan in FY 2009 and was last updated 06/22/2009.

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.11(c)(3) Order of Selection

- Identify the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services.
- Identify the justification for the order.

- Identify the service and outcome goals.
- Identify the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- Describe how individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities.

This agency is not implementing an Order of Selection.

This screen was last updated on Jun 22 2009 6:59PM by Jane McIntosh

Screen 14 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

Specify the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.

DVR plans to distribute the all of the funds received under Section 622 of the Act for the provision of Supported Employment (SE) services statewide through the division's MIS to individual counselor budgets. DVR anticipates adequate SE funds to provide the full range of VR services to all eligible individuals who require SE services.

DVR counselors will expend Title VI, Part B funds after receipt of documentation confirming the provision of extended services. The goal of Alaska's supported employment program is to maintain a system whereby individuals with the most significant disabilities are afforded the opportunity to participate in integrated competitive employment.

Based upon number of individuals receiving SE services over the past five years, DVR estimates 185 individuals will receive SE funded services delivered through an Individualized Plan of Employment during FY2011.

Goals, strategies, and priorities for the maintenance and expansion of SE services include the following:

1. Emphasize community based, integrated employment settings; work with the Governor's Council, the Alaska Mental Health Board, Community Behavioral Health programs and the Trust to increase vocational programs within the mental health service delivery system
2. Pursue increased long-term state funding for SE; work to reduce the waitlist for DD services
3. Explore opportunities for CRPs to become employment networks to provide long-term supports
4. Work with the community mental health system to increase and reinstate work related programs within community mental health programs statewide

This screen was last updated on May 12 2010 7:49PM by Jane McIntosh

Screen 15 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.11(d) State's Strategies

This attachment should include required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the vocational rehabilitation and the supported employment programs. See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Act and Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA.)

- Describe the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.
- Identify how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process.
- Describe how assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis.

- Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities.
- Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.
- Identify plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs, if applicable.
- Describe strategies to improve the performance with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators.
- Describe strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.
- Describe how the agency's strategies will be used to:
 - achieve the goals and priorities identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1);
 - support innovation and expansion activities; and
 - overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the state Supported Employment Services Program.

Alaska DVR engages in an ongoing strategic planning process focusing on continual improvement activities to enhance services and maximize the number and quality of employment outcomes, especially for those identified as priority populations through the comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA). Strategic planning also gives DVR the opportunity to concentrate on the principles of efficient uses of personnel, technology, and financial resources to deliver quality rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities. Expanding and improving services remains an agency priority as the needs and demographics of individuals with disabilities evolve through the CSNA, data analysis and on-going surveys.

The strategic planning team includes VR fiscal people, VR managers and the VR leadership team, the chair of the SRC, the CAP director, a CIL director and a representative from the AIVR programs. The strategic planning process includes an annual face-to-face statewide planning meeting as well as quarterly progress reports with DVR staff and the SRC.

The goals, priorities, strategies, performance measures and outcomes found in the strategic plan are developed using information from the CSNA, on-going data analysis from DVR's MIS/case management system, satisfaction surveys and other program evaluation and quality assurance initiatives. The goals and priorities are identified in Attachment 4.11(c) (1). The strategies to accomplish the goals address the issues identified in this attachment.

Goal 1 - Service Delivery: DVR will deliver high quality vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities to assist them in obtaining employment consistent with their career goals.

This goal reflects DVR's continued focus on improving and expanding the VR service delivery system with the priorities and strategies identified in the CSNA.

Priority 1.1: Improve VR transition services for youth with disabilities

Strategies:

- Develop long range transition plan for the division

- Determine most effective strategies/methods/time frame for informing schools about DVR services
- Develop outreach strategy for youth with other health impairments (504 students)
- Explore use of social media such as Twitter and Facebook to connect DVR services with youth
- VR staff have a positive presence at the annual Directors of Special Education conference
- Have a VR presence on workgroups both local and statewide associated with youth related initiatives
- Develop strategies to collaborate with businesses to assist youth with disabilities to obtain employment
- Increase the rehabilitation rate for youth
- Provide summer internships to high school special education teachers in order for them to learn about DVR

Priority 1.2: Improve VR services in rural Alaska

The most recent CSNA (see Attachment 4.11(a)) identified individuals living in rural Alaska as being underserved. Alaska Natives comprise the largest population living in rural Alaska.

Strategies

- Create a work group of DVR counselors who serve rural areas to share effective service delivery strategies
- DVR and TVR staff share technical expertise
- Invite TVR staff to attend DVR sponsored trainings
- Maximize number of shared cases with TVR
- Assign counselors to serve primary or hub-communities and provide adequate travel funds
- DVR staff participate in rural employment camps
- Develop more CRPs in rural Alaska
- Identify strategies for serving individuals who are not Alaska Natives but whom live in rural Alaska
- Investigate use of technology for distance delivery of services (web cams, etc.)
- Develop contingency plan for potential loss of discretionary grants with TVR programs
- Evaluate options providing counselors with equipment and resources when traveling to effectively provide a high level of service to individuals with a disability
- Provide support to the Center for Blind and Visually Impaired Adults for the expansion of services to individuals blind in rural Alaska.

Priority 1.3: Evaluate the effectiveness and use of the in-house vocational evaluation system

Strategies

- Develop MIS reporting and referral systems
- Develop statewide standards for performance and capacity
- Develop mechanism for matching evaluation services to outcomes
- Determine counselor needs and develop a marketing strategy for evaluation services
- Analyze relationship of evaluation services to timely case movement

Priority 1.4: Improve services in job centers for Alaskans with disabilities

DVR maintains active participation on both state and local planning groups formed to develop

and implement Alaska's workforce investment system and promotes universal access to core employment services by all consumers, including minorities and those with disabilities. DVR is co-located with One-Stop Job Centers in various areas of the state. When appropriate, DVR performs training and consultations to ensure excellent customer service to one-stop customers with disabilities. DVR supports the activities and mission of disability navigators who assist people with disabilities at one-stop centers to make informed choices about employment.

Strategies

- Provide training on DVR services to rural job center staff
- Explore options for job center staff to be trained on various types of disabilities
- Explore options for supporting AT devices in job centers
- Support the reinstatement of the statewide Training Academy
- VR leadership team and VR managers continue to identify functional job center issues that require on-going work at all levels of the division
- VR continues to support initiatives in the job-centers such as the Disability Program Navigators and Start-up Alaska Self-employment
- Support strong partnerships to address cross-agency differences in policy and federal program requirements
- DVR staff provide long distance support to job center staff where DVR counselors travel on an itinerant basis
- Partner with the Division of Business Partnership to maximize the number of joint cases
- Ensure DVR contacts all individuals receiving Job Training services who self-identify as having an employment related disability
- Define role of DVR in job centers

Priority 1.5: Support and/or develop consumer satisfaction surveys or community forums

Strategies

- Evaluate use of on-going open cases survey
- Effectively distribute survey information
- Maximize use of on-line web surveys
- Provide support for the Governor's Committee consumer satisfaction survey
- Provide support to the Governor's Committee for public testimony

Priority 1.6: Meet or exceed state and federal production standards

Strategies

- Formalize training for new staff on production goals and AWARE case management tools
- Disseminate information to staff on a regular basis on production statewide
- Analyze areas when standards are not met and develop plan for improvement, i.e. days from eligibility to plan

Priority 1.7: Enhance the CRP service delivery system through evaluation, training and development of new CRPs

DVR also works with community rehabilitation programs to ensure that they have the staff

training, outreach capacity and commitment to meet the needs of all, including those who are minorities. DVR employs a staff specialist to support and enhance the unique relationship between the state agency and various community rehabilitation programs. This staff specialist maintains ongoing communications, assesses needs, and provides training opportunities as well as formal and informal consultations. The specialist reviews and permits the programs to provide VR related services.

Strategies

- Develop a work plan for the recruitment and training of CRPs
- Provide additional CRP information for DVR participants on the internet
- Develop statewide training plan on behavioral health issues
- Develop more CRPs in all areas of the state
- Develop CRPs in rural areas with consideration given to local resources such as natural helpers, elders and teachers
- Develop orientation and training materials for VR staff about the use of CRPs
- Assess the specialized skills of CRPs to meet the needs of DVR participants either by occupation or disability
- Evaluate outcome/milestone or other payment systems for CRPs
- Develop documentation for staff maintenance of CRP information in AWARE
- Encourage community behavioral health centers and providers of cognitively disabled services to develop vocational programs
- Survey staff and CRPs on an on-going basis
- Explore further use of centers for independent living

Priority 1.8: Enhance the VR service delivery system through the use of technology

DVR has devoted extensive strategic planning and workgroup time to developing an assistive technology delivery system that provides the assessment, training and product delivery needed by individuals during career planning and testing, training and in job placement. DVR has designated staff that specializes in assistive technologies. DVR's Evaluation Center and the Assistive Technology Library of Alaska serve as a key resource where staff experts and products can be accessed on a statewide basis.

Strategies

- Continually evaluate new technology such as assistive technology (AT), social networking
- Update orientation video
- Explore video conferencing in VR offices
- VR offices are equipped with the required technology for services to be accessible
- Explore division support of case management services for Center for the Blind
- Evaluate the current use of assistive technology in the service delivery system
- Procure video phones for all field offices
- Enhance the information technology infrastructure for staff to achieve greater efficiencies in providing services.

Goal 2 Staff Development: DVR will recruit, employ, retain and train the most qualified and

highly skilled rehabilitation staff.

This goal reflects the value DVR places on well trained staff and the serious need for succession planning with the anticipated loss of key staff in the near future.

Priority 2.1: Recruit and retain qualified staff

Strategies

- Identify strategies for hiring qualified VR counselors
- Maximize training funds to support VR counselors in graduate rehabilitation programs
- Offer practicum opportunities and internships to rehabilitation graduate students
- Maximize the number of counselors who are Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC)
- Recognize employee performance
- Develop a consistent statewide method for evaluating employee performance
- Develop and keep current employee development plans
- Survey staff
- Enhance the information technology infrastructure for staff to achieve greater efficiencies in providing services.

Priority 2.2: Provide on-going training opportunities

Strategies

- Provide subject matter training as identified through program evaluation (staff and surveys, case review, etc.)
- Develop staff training modules as identified
- Re-establish the training team to prioritize and develop training opportunities
- Develop a training outline for VR managers
- Continued use of on-line training
- Leverage training resources from outside partners
- Develop a comprehensive system for the documentation of staff training
- Provide trainings with CRC credits
- Identify evidence based or promising practices in VR, i.e. motivational interviewing

Priority 2.3: Support leadership development and succession planning

Strategies

- Support staff participation in leadership training programs such as the Emerging Leaders program
- VR counselors participate on regional case review teams
- Develop in-house leadership seminars or trainings
- Identify and make available to staff public policy, administrative or leadership information
- Utilize Division of Personnel and unions resources
- Staff mentoring, job shadowing
- Identify staff strengths and interests
- Identify training required for staff to represent DVR on appropriate boards
- Provide support to the statewide coordinators for blind and deaf

- Develop long-range succession plan

Goal 3 DVR will distinguish its role in the workforce system and will leverage partnerships to maximize resources and support for employment of individuals with disabilities.

This goal is intended to strengthen our connection to other programs that serve individuals with disabilities and to develop relationships with employers. DVR plans programs that are accessible to all people in Alaska and sees its role as pivotal in helping individuals overcome barriers that include gender, race, national origin, color, disability or age.

Priority 3.1: Partner with employers to promote the hiring of people with disabilities

Strategies

- DVR supports the replication of the Anchorage Integrated Employment Services team in Fairbanks and Juneau
- Attend career days at local universities
- Continue to develop best practices establishing the State of Alaska as a model employer
- Employers see VR as a resource
- Participate in local community groups such the Chambers of Commerce and SHRIM
- Develop teams within offices to meet the needs of employers
- Coordinate the employer outreach functions of the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant with the Governor's Council
- Collaborate with federal employers with the extensive use of Schedule A.

Priority 3.2: Partner with other service providers to maximize resources and coordinate services especially for individuals who are in need of long term supported employment services and employment services from community behavioral health providers

Strategies

- Ensure MOAs with appropriate state agencies are current and effective
- Work with SILC and CILs to increase the opportunities for the most severely disabled Alaskans to become employed
- Work with job-center partners to maximize shared cases
- Work with the Governor's Council, the Alaska Mental Health Board, Community Behavioral Health programs, and the Trust to increase vocational programs within the mental health service delivery system
- Together with mental health centers identify barriers to providing vocational services
- Strengthen relationships with community behavioral health providers
- Encourage the development of employment networks to provide the long term support services for both supported employment and Social Security beneficiaries
- Be actively involved with initiatives proposed by other agencies that could affect DVR and the VR service delivery

Utilization of the Funds Reserved for Innovation and Expansion Activities

DVR sets aside a portion of funds allotted under Section 110 of the Act for development and implementation of innovative approaches to improve the provision of VR services, particularly for individuals with the most significant disabilities. DVR has recently used these funds in support of the State Independent Living Council (SILC) and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

The SRC is a full and active partner in the development of agency policies, regulations and procedures.

The SRC collaborates with DVR to hold public meetings in different areas around the state each year. These meetings are another way for DVR to identify needs and to gather trend information for strategic planning.

DVR also supports the SILC. The director of DVR is a member of the SILC and a DVR representative participates in the development of the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL).

Innovation and Expansion Activities for 2009 include:

Support of the SRC: \$ 75,000

Support of the SILC: \$175,000

This screen was last updated on May 13 2010 4:57PM by Jane McIntosh

Screen 16 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Reports of Progress

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment (SE) Goals

1. Clearly identify all VR program goals consistent with the goals described in the FY 2009 Attachment 4.11(c)(1), including an evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals were achieved.

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Goal 1 DVR will provide high quality services to all eligible individuals including those requiring Supported Employment services by expanding service delivery systems and by managing resources to stay off an order of selection.

DVR defines high quality services as the ability to serve all those eligible for VR services; to provide timely services; to maximize consumer involvement; to assist finding employment with good wages; to provide services that meet the need of our consumers; and to continue improving the service delivery system for those living in rural Alaska and for transition students.

PROGRESS

Measure 1: Stay off an order of selection

Outcome: DVR was not on an order of selection during FY2009

Measure 2: Number of individuals closed with an employment outcome is equal to or greater than those closed in employment during the previous year.

Outcome: DVR did not meet this goal; DVR had 524 successful closures in FY 2009 and 568 in FFY2008.

Measure 3: The average wage of employed individuals exiting the program is 65% of the State's average wage.

Outcome: DVR met this goal; the average wage as a percent of the State's average wage was 63%.

Measure 4: 90% of cases reviewed as part of DVR's quality assurance case-review process demonstrate the principles of informed choice are integrated throughout the vocational rehabilitation process.

Outcome: 96% of the cases reviewed documented the principles of informed choice implemented throughout the rehabilitation process.

Measure 5: 90% of the consumer satisfaction surveys report involvement in the choosing employment goal.

Outcome: 92% of the consumers reported they were involved in selecting their employment goal.

Measure 6: Presence in high schools, youth related activities and the number of youth Increase as DVR consumers.

Outcome: 18% of the FFY2009 applicants were youth which is up 3% from FFY2008; 19% of those closed rehabilitated were youth at application which is down from 13% in FY2008. DVR continues to support summer internships for special education teachers, have a presence in high schools and participate in the Statewide Special Education Conference.

Measure 7: Maintain a high level of involvement with AIVR, Tribal Voc Rehab (TVR) programs.

Outcome: Tribal VR programs: Chief of Rehabilitation Services assigned as a liaison to Tribal consortium; tribal staff invited to DVR training; and working of joint cases continues to be a priority; Anchorage Regional Manager providing mentoring to TVR counselors with programs in his region. Itinerant counselor from Northern Region providing evaluation services to TVR clients. DVR supports CANAR by sending staff to out-of-state meeting and providing a high level of support for in-state CANAR meeting. DVR supports the efforts of the TVR programs in writing their grants for continued funding. DVR continue to be an active member of the VR-TVVR consortium.

Measure 8: Maximize presence in rural Alaska.

Outcome: DVR has continued to provide adequate funding for counselors to travel to rural Alaska. As evidenced by case review from the Northern region that is responsible for the entire Western Alaska, the counselor maintains a high level of contact with both the TVR directors and clients.

STRATEGIES

- All field staff and managers are trained and use reports from the AWARE case management system to track consumers progress and monitor resources.
- Principles of informed choice are infused within the DVR services delivery system.
- On-going consumer satisfaction surveys conducted with feedback to field staff.
- Educate field staff on quality assurance process and measures.
- Outreach of VR counselor to community organizations to ensure quality referrals to maintain a constant flow of individuals into the VR system.
- Provide information to VR counselors as to success of program, i.e. increase in wages, client satisfaction, meeting goals, etc.
- VR counselors assigned to all schools where there is an DVR office in the community or where DVR counselors travel on an itinerant basis.
- Transition coordinator and staff continue to participate in the special education directors annual conference.
- Transition coordinator and assigned DVR staff participate with various community partners who have youth and employment grants.
- Policies continue to be reviewed and updated as needed with subsequent staff training.
- The on-going case review process has a quality assurance and compliance focus.
- A full-time VR counselor continues to be assigned to rural, Western Alaska.
- Continued focus and training on the use of assessment and the use by itinerant counselors.
- Invite Tribal Voc Rehab staff to DVR trainings.
- DVR infuses the principles of careers rather than jobs into the culture of the agency through training of counselors and supporting client choice principles.
- Include the division's CRP specialist on the DVR case review team to ensure quality results from vendors.

IMPEDIMENTS

- The size of the state is a barrier to providing services to rural Alaska.
- Reaching transition- aged youth in a meaningful way in order to engage them.
- High turnover of special education teachers
- Turndown in the economy

Goal 2 DVR will employ qualified personnel to effectively serve our consumers and provide for future organizational leadership by providing adequate resources for on-going training and staff development.

PROGRESS

Measure 1: Percentage of available VR counseling positions filled with certified rehabilitation counselors (CRCs) or who are in graduate programs to become CRCs. Goal is to have 100% of counselors meeting or working towards certification.

Outcome: 64% of VR counselors have their CRC; 8% have taken the exam and are waiting results pending completion of their final graduate course work; 13% of the remaining counselors are currently enrolled in graduate programs and the 15% are scheduled to begin work in the Fall of 2009.

Measure 2: VR staff are provided opportunities for professional growth and development.

Outcome: DVR continues to provide funds for tuition and books for graduate level course work in order to meet CRC standards. Continuing education opportunities are available to all counseling staff throughout the year in a variety of venues including lectures on medical aspects of various disabilities, statewide and regional trainings, on-line and web based sessions. DVR also continues to support staff in the Emerging Leaders program.

Measure 3: VR counselors and support staff have tools for case management.

Outcome: DVR continues to support the enhancement, upgrade, and training on the Division's case management and information system; works with rural counselors to ensure to the maximum extent possible, are available for

STRATEGIES

- Support VR staff lacking the academic credentials to sit for the CRC by paying for tuition and books for those classes.
- Provide ongoing CRC certified training for CRCs in order to maintain their certification.
- Marketing VR as a career choice at job fairs.
- Continue to pursue out-of-state hiring with the Division of Personnel.
- Offer staff opportunities for leadership development both within the Division and through RSA sponsored programs.

IMPEDIMENTS

- State hiring policies.
- No university in the state offering a VR counseling program.
- When out-of-state hiring approved, it is difficult to attract qualified individuals to Alaska.
- Even though DVR supports staff in pursuit of academic courses for CRC, it is often difficult for staff to combine work and school.
- Staff retiring
- Staff leaving for higher paying Federal VA jobs.

Goal 3 DVR will work to ensure the programmatic and physical accessibility of One-Stop Job Centers; to expand long-term supported services for SE consumers; and to enhance services provided by other programs to individuals with disabilities by collaborating with WIA partners, the Division of Senior and Disability Services (DSDS) and other stakeholders.

PROGRESS

Measure: Increased employment oriented community mental health programs.

Outcome: DVR is working with the DSDS to support two separate pilot programs in Juneau with an employment focus for consumers who are mentally ill. The Director of DVR and the Director of DSDS have formed a group or task force available for those consumers with a mental health for Collaborative efforts with schools, community rehabilitation programs and WIA partners.

Measures: WIA partners and DVR work cooperatively to ensure Job Center resource rooms are accessible and Job Center staff are knowledgeable of disability related issues.

Outcome: DVR supports the Disability Program Navigators and participates in training Job Center staff on disabilities

STRATEGIES

- All school districts have VR counselors assigned to them.
- Summer internship program for special education teachers was reinstated and expanded using funding from the Department of Education and Early Development.
- Assign transition coordinator to develop relationship with special education directors.
- Transition coordinator represents DVR and makes presentation at special education directors annual conference.
- Transition coordinator collaborates with various community partners who have youth and employment as a focus.
- Review of CRP performance and utilization has become as part of the case review process.
- Include an employment focus in the SPIL. Support CILs in efforts to obtain increased state funding. DVR continues its strong representation on the SILC.
- Integrated Employment Services Committee (IES) within the Job Centers to establish unified marketing strategies to employers; cross train staff to better understand the assortment of services available to consumers to maximize their success; and share job leads in order to have a single point of contact for employers.
- Reinstate the training academy in the One-Stop Job Centers; develop statewide teams to prevent partners from duplicating efforts and expenditure of resource and increase jointly shared cases.
- Cross training of job center staff; collaborated on grants such as customized employment and disability program navigators; developed job center teams around assessment and training.

IMPEDIMENTS

- Lack of funding for DSDS employment programs
- Reduced funding and staff for Job Centers

2. Identify all supported employment program goals consistent with the goals described in Attachment 4.11(c)(4), including an evaluation of the extent to which the supported employment program goals were achieved.

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

All eligible individuals for whom Supported Employment was an appropriate employment option received VR services.

1. Emphasize community based integrated employment settings rather than sheltered employment

Measure: Number of individual closed with long term supports in a SE employment outcome who are employed in an integrated setting.

Outcome: In FFY2009, there were no individuals closed in extended employment or in a non-integrated setting. Forty-six (46) individuals receiving SE services were closed rehabilitated. One-hundred-eight-one (181) individuals received SE services under an IPE.

Strategies: DVR encourages its counselors to work with those programs providing long-term supports to provide integrated employment opportunities.

2. Pursue increased long-term state funding for SE services

Measure: Collaborate with the Division of Behavioral Health and the Governor's Council on Disability and Special Education to increase the state funding for long-term supports.

Outcome: A group including representatives from DVR, Behavioral Health and the Governor's Council on Disability and Special Education was formed to identify specific funding needs and strategies for increased state funding for long-term supports. Funding increments were included in the FY2009 budget request.

Strategies: DVR collaborated with those entities within the State whose budget funds long-term support services. Behavioral Health garnered the support of disability groups within the State to work with their legislative representatives to support the increased funding.

3. Work with the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Senior and Disability Services to reduce the wait list for the funding of long-term SE services

Measure: DVR and other stake holders are meeting to address the wait list issue.

Outcome: A work group has been formed to address this issue.

Strategies: The first step is getting a dialog at the Director's level regarding this topic. This has occurred, but due to demanding schedules, this continues to be a challenge.

4. Work with the community mental health system to increase and reinstate work related

programs within community mental health programs statewide

Measure: Employment related programs are included within community mental health programs

Outcome: DVR staff member assigned to create statewide group of stakeholders around this issue. Two pilot programs in Juneau began in FFY2009 with employment components

Strategies: Assign adequate DVR staff to this project. Continue to work with mental health providers around continued funding.

5. Investigate the viability of using Social Security work incentives and the revised Ticket to Work Program as a means of client/self funded long term support.

Measure: Determine what programs are available and disseminate appropriate information to staff.

Outcome: DVR staff have been assigned to research information

Strategies: Use current information on Ticket to Work to determine possible alternatives within the process.

3. Provide an Assessment of the performance of the VR program on the standards and indicators for FY 2009.

DVR achieved successful performance on both evaluation standards as identified in 34 CFR Part 361.82. DVR did not meet indicator 1.1 (Equal or exceed previous performance period for the number of successful closures).

This was the first time since 2001 that DVR failed to meet all standards and indicators. Factors identified as contributing to DVR not meeting indicator 1.1 for FFY2009 are a general downturn in the economy coupled with an influx of oil money into the state in FFY2008 which resulted in a banner year for employment.

4. Provide a report on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized in FY 2009.

DVR sets aside a portion of funds allotted under Section 110 of the Act for development and implementation of innovative approaches to improve the provision of VR services, particularly for individuals with the most significant disabilities. DVR has recently used these funds in support of the State Independent Living Council (SILC) and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

The SRC is a full and active partner in the development of agency policies, regulations and procedures.

The SRC collaborates with DVR to hold public meetings in different areas around the state each year. These meetings are another way for DVR to identify needs and to gather trend information for strategic planning.

DVR also supports the SILC. The director of DVR is a member of the SILC and a DVR representative participates in the development of the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL).

Innovation and Expansion Activities for 2009 include:

Support of the SRC: \$ 75,000

Support of the SILC: \$175,000

This screen was last updated on May 13 2010 7:29PM by Jane McIntosh

Screen 17 of 17

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

**Alaska Dept of Labor & Workforce Development - Division of Vocational Rehab
State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)**

Attachment 6.3 Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

- Describe quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities
- Describe the timing of the transition to extended services

Supported employment creates opportunity for Alaskans with the most severe disabilities including those with developmental disabilities, severe mental illness and traumatic brain injuries. The opportunity to secure and maintain meaningful employment requires a collaborative effort between DVR and those agencies providing the required long term supports.

Quality of Supported Employment Services

Quality of supported employment services is assured through the employment of a number of tools including:

- The establishment of formal Service Provider Agreements between DVR and those providing

the rehabilitation services;

- The exercise of informed choice by the DVR consumer;
- Proactive rehabilitation counselors;
- Program evaluations and reviews;
- Public forums; and
- DVR staff involvement in committees and boards pertaining to the needs of those eligible for supported employment.

Appropriate, quality services are the outcome of a process in which the consumer satisfaction assumes a role of paramount importance. Standards for integrated work settings for individuals with most severe disabilities are jointly established by the counselor and consumer. Key emphasis is placed upon the: strengths; interests; concerns; abilities; and capabilities of the individual.

DVR has an on-going commitment to quality supported employment services as evidenced by the recent formation of a high level committee including the DVR Chief of Rehabilitation Services and the Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Disabilities to evaluate the current level of supported employment services available.

Scope and Extent of Services

During FFY 2009, DVR purchased services from eight-six different vendors from around the State for supported employment eligible consumers. The majority of service providers are located in urban areas or rural hub communities. In an effort to provide supported employment services in remote villages, DVR works collaboratively with the AIVR Tribal VR programs to develop and provide rehabilitation services.

Effective Customized Employment (CE) strategies have also taken hold throughout the workforce system. DVR has integrated into its service delivery system many of the features of the customized wrap-around service approach including self-employment.

Transition to Extended Services

DVR provides SE services using funds as authorized under Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act to those eligible individuals who, because of the significance of their disability, require intensive services to gain employment and extended services to maintain employment.

DVR provides intensive SE services under a place and train model until employment stability is achieved for a period not to exceed 18 months. The individual then transitions into the long term extended services needed for job maintenance. Extended services are provided by an agency other than DVR or through natural supports.

A VR counselor must have a reasonable expectation that extended services are or will become available to the individual prior to developing an individualized plan for employment (IPE) to provide SE services.

DVR provides intensive training services to SE consumers for a maximum of 18 months. Special circumstances may occur where the VR counselor and the individual agree to extend the training

in order to achieve the vocational goal on the IPE. Supported employment providers who do not receive extended support funding from the Division of Senior and Disability Services, use natural supports and non-traditional resources to provide extended support services.

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According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is 1820-0500. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 25 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4760. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Carol Dobak, Chief of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program Unit, Rehabilitation Services Administration, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue S.W., PCP, Room 5014, Washington, D.C. 20202.